

STATEMENT BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

6:40 P.M., February 1, 1963

The information contained in Senator Thurmond's weekly news letter is at wide variance with carefully evaluated data collected by U.S. Intelligence from continued surveillance and other sources. The information obtained by our intelligence has been and is being made public to the extent it does not compromise intelligence sources.

If Senator Thurmond has proof of any kind to support the information he has released, which differs from official intelligence information, the Department of Defense would like to receive the evidence.

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

By

SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC)

February 1, 1963

BEHIND THE BRUSH CURTAIN

Hopes based on the Soviet Union's show of removing its missiles are being shattered. Behind the Brush Curtain around Cuba is a formidable Soviet strategic military base.

The question of whether the Soviets did actually remove missiles from Cuba is, from a practical standpoint, becoming moot. The question lingers because in no instance were bare missiles revealed to our observers of Soviet ships leaving Cuba. There was no indication that any of the half-dozen missile launch rings and other supporting equipment for the ICBM's were aboard departing Soviet vessels. Nor was there observed anything to indicate that more than a very few of the some two dozen launch stands and cradles previously observed were aboard.

The question of what was removed became moot because of what is obviously in Cuba now.

Excerpt from Secretary McNamara's testimony before House Armed Services Committee, Jan. 30, 1963:

We are convinced beyond any reasonable doubt that 42 medium-range ballistic missiles were removed from Cuba aboard 6 Soviet ships between Nov. 5-9, and that 48 IL-28 bombers were similarly removed between December 5-6.

All of the IL-28 bombers and 36 of the missile/transporters were uncovered for photographic and visual alongside inspection while the Soviet vessels were at sea and the remainder of the missiles were observed covered in exactly the same observable condition as previously noted at the specific missile sites. We are convinced that the Soviets did not have sufficient time between the decision to dismantle and the actual shipment dates to construct dummy missiles and transporters possessing the fine detail and precise measurements of the equipment shipped out. Photographic evidence also is available showing both unloading and outshipping of missile cradles and of fuel and oxidizer trailers. Without this associated equipment, a missile system is inoperative. Since removal of the missiles, our coverage has not revealed the existence of strategic weapons systems in Cuba.

Reliable sources estimate the forces in Cuba under the command of Soviet General C.O. Slazenko to be between 30,000 and 40,000, with supporting air and naval units. The value of the Soviet-supplied military equipment exceeds \$1 billion. This equipment includes approximately 600 tanks, of such late model types as the T-54, T-34 and JS-2, and amphibious tanks; more than 200 armored personnel carriers and scout cars have been observed; more than 2,000 artillery pieces are in the Soviet-Cuban arsenal, including 76 and 122 mm. guns and howitzers, 57 mm. anti-tank guns and assorted anti-aircraft pieces; and more than 1,000 mortars have been counted, some of which are as large as 160 mm. The rocket launcher inventory, a part of which was displayed in the January Havana parade, numbers in the thousands. Conventional artillery is supplemented by nuclear-tipped FROG Missiles, with a 300-mile range. There appear to be four battalions of these missiles. Vehicles to support the combat force are well over the 15,000 figure.

Approximately 17,000 including all Soviet military services.

Less than 400 tanks

Less than 200

Less than 2,000

Less than 800 mortars

Less than 1,800

Approximately 50-mile range

The 24 sites of surface to air missiles are stocked with only slightly less than 1,000 missiles, mostly SA-2s, but including an increasing number of SA-3s, which are effective against both high altitude and low altitude aircraft.

Less than 600

More than 150 cruise missiles, some of which arrived within the last three weeks, are on four coastal defense sites. Estimates of ballistic missiles with a 1,100 - 2,200 mile range in underground facilities run between 100 and 200. These ballistic missiles are supported by the latest in radar and communications equipment. Indeed, the military communications set-up in Cuba is rated as among the best in the world. The strategic importance attached by the Soviets to their missile deployment in Cuba is demonstrated by the continuing assignment in Cuba of Soviet Lt. Gen. Pavel B. Danilovich, prominent Russian expert in strategic missiles. A reported shipment to Cuba recently of atomic warhead materials was estimated as quite substantial.

The Soviet Air Force in Cuba has more than 300 planes and helicopters, of which about 2/3 are MIGs. Approximately 40 of the latter are MIG-21s, which are armed with air to surface missiles. There are at least two U-2 type reconnaissance-type aircraft and some IL-28 bombers in underground movements.

The Soviet naval complement in Cuba consists of more than 100 craft, including 12 to

We have no evidence of any ballistic missiles in Cuba.

We have no evidence of nuclear warheads in Cuba.

Approximately 800 -- $\frac{2}{3}$ / MIGs

We have no evidence of recon or bomber craft

Less than 40 craft

15 Komar class missile boats armed with four short range surface to surface missiles each, motor torpedo boats, subchasers and patrol boats. Although it is impossible to determine where they are "based," Soviet submarines are reported in Cuba and call frequently at Cuban ports and bays.

A total of 12 Komars

A check of the weapons complement observed in Cuba against Soviet military tables of equipment indicates the presence of a complete Soviet Army, and the inventory normally assigned to a Soviet Air Army. Reliable sources have reported a Soviet Motorized Division, an Armored Division and an Elite Guards Division in Cuba, which bears out the presence of a Soviet Army. Significantly, disposition of Soviet forces are at the vicinity of three identified missile bases and one airfield near Holguin in eastern Cuba--the exact sites that were pinpointed in October as the principal locations of "offensive" weapons.

The units shown as divisions are of approximately battalion strength. The full strength is approximately 1 division, NOT an army. These troops are organized into 4 composite units.

The American people are entitled to know the truth.

THE END